

Topic #4: Discussion of Trends in Disasters and Disaster Fatalities

Natural disasters are increasing worldwide because of climate change. Modern climate change is largely due to the emission of greenhouse gases, the burning of fossil fuels, and industrial activities (NASA, 2022). This has led to a rapid increase in global surface temperatures, resulting in severe heat waves and droughts in some areas of the world, and floods in other parts of the world. California is currently experiencing one of the worst heat waves in history, leading to an excessive amount of electricity and power consumption of air conditioners and further fueling the spread of wildfires (Cappucci et al., 2022). This has a great impact on populations and the built environment because it acts as a negative feedback loop. As the temperature rises, people are eager to find ways to keep cool. They resort to air conditioning or fans, which require the consumption of energy and power. This contributes to the worsening of climate change, and the increasing dry heat can lead to more forest fires.

I think the number of fatalities is decreasing although the number of natural disasters is increasing because we are becoming more and more prepared. For example, earthquake kits are becoming more common in most workplaces, schools, and even in homes. We have known that climate change is a serious issue for decades but now that the effects are actually being seen, I think this makes the issue more real. As a result, it cannot be ignored anymore, and now more and more people are anxious to prepare for disasters in the best way that they can. I think that in some parts of the world, there are fewer terrorist events now compared to the past because security, both cyber and government, has improved vastly. I also think that the decrease in terrorist events can be in part due to the COVID pandemic. There were many restrictions put in place to prevent the spread of the pandemic so it was rare to have crowd gatherings and events with a lot of people. As a result, there were not many opportunities for terrorist attacks to take place.

Citations

1. NASA. (2022, September 1). *The Causes of Climate Change*. Global Climate Change. <https://climate.nasa.gov/causes/>.
2. Cappucci, M., Leonard, D., & Samenow, J. (2022, September 2). *Punishing heat wave in West sets records, fuels fires*. The Washington Post. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2022/09/02/western-heatwave-california-fire-drought/>.